

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1-20 are currently being amended. Accordingly, claims 1-20 remain pending in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

The amendments to claims 1-20 have been made to remove reference numbers from each of the claims.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 8, 11-15, and 17-19.

In the Office Action, claim 11 was objected to because of a minor informality. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 11 to correct the minor informality indicated in the objection.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 16, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Okada (JP 2000-063104). Claim 1 recites that a drive system for a fuel cell comprises a reformer which generates reformat gas containing hydrogen by reforming a fuel gas and supplies the reformat gas to the fuel cell, and a gas supply device provided upstream of the reformer which supplies a mixture of the fuel gas and air to the reformer when the system is in a normal running state, wherein the gas supply device generates a high temperature gas containing a fuel component for a reforming reaction and supplies the high temperature gas containing the fuel component for the reforming reaction to the reformer when the system starts up.

In Okada, the startup warming procedure is described in paragraphs [0033]-[0036]. As disclosed in Okada, during the startup warming procedure, combustion chamber 46 receives air from air nozzle 52 and methanol from injector 48. The air/methanol mixture is burned in the combustion chamber 46 under a heating operation of a glow plug 49. The high temperature gas produced in the combustion chamber 46 is mixed with secondary air (not fuel) supplied from the second air path 64 and supplied to the fuel reforming chamber 36.

Therefore, in Okada, the gas supplied to the reforming chamber 36 during the startup warming procedure is merely a high temperature gas not containing the fuel component for the reforming reaction.

Thus, in contrast to claim 1, Okada fails to disclose or suggest the gas supply device generates a high temperature gas containing a fuel component for a reforming reaction and supplies the high temperature gas containing the fuel component for the reforming reaction to the reformer when the system starts up. Rather, as discussed above, the high temperature gas supplied to the reforming chamber 36 during startup has no fuel component for the reforming reaction. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Okada.

Claims 2-7, 9, 10, 16, and 20 are also patentably distinguishable from Okada by virtue of their dependence from claim 1, as well as their additional recitations.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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